(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) There are 123 aircraft more than 20 years of age of which 38 are registered with the public sector operators and 85 with private operators.

(b) In order to ensure continued airworthiness of the aircraft, the manufacturers have prescribed certain documents, which require additional structural inspections, ageing aircraft repair and modification programme, corrosion prevention control programme, repair assessment programme in case of old aircraft. Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued guidelines for such aged aircraft for strict compliance by the operators in the form of Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) Section 2, Series 'F', Part X. DGCA also ensures compliance with all the requirements by closely monitoring all major components and taking corrective action whereever found necessary by regular audits and surveillance inspections of the aircraft and maintenance facilities. In addition the Certificate of Airworthiness (C of A) for aircraft beyond 20 years is to be renewed every year as against 5 years for aircraft upto 10 years old.

(c) and (d) There are no stipulated regulations for replacement of the aged aircraft. An aircraft is airworthy as long as it meets airworthiness standards prescribed by DGCA. However, DGCA does not permit import of aircraft more than 15 years old for passenger services.

(e) Aircraft more than 20 years of age are also airworthy as long as there are maintained as per manufacturer's instructions and additional checks given by DGCA.

Guidelines for private carriers to fly abroad

3512. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has decided to conduct a detailed review in the first half of 2007 to examine whether there is a need to change or amend the existing guidelines on allowing private carriers to fly abroad and also cover other areas related to the growth of the sector;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry is also considering three distinct units to perform ground-handling works at airports across the country; and

(c) whether the Group of Ministers has already endorsed the proposal to set up an Airport Economic Regulatory Authority and whether issues concerning the Defence Ministry have been sorted out?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The guidelines relating to various aspects of civil aviation are reviewed from time to time to address the evolving needs of the sector.

(b) As per the revised policy approved by the Government, the ground handling services at specified airports will be provided by the 3 distinct units, namely, the respective airport operator itself, or its Joint Venture Company; the subsidiary companies of the national carriers, *viz.*, Air India and Indian Airlines or their Joint Venture and by any other ground handling service provider selected through competitive bidding by the airport operator. At all other airports, in addition to above entities, self handling will be permitted to the airlines excluding foreign airlines.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Loss incurred by Airports

3513. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of airports in the country are incurring losses during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details of the losses incurred (Rupees in Lakhs) by each airport during the year 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 are : Port Blair (295.10, 357.43 & 284.88), Cuddapah (5.91, 8.06 & 11.66), Rajamundry (52.35, 137.78 & 62.38), Tirupathi (290.04, 401.34 & 407.57), Vijaywada (158.46,